

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BEIRUT 06281 161227Z

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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION

1. SUMMARY. BEIRUT DAILIES COMMENTING ON U.S. RECOVERY OF MAYAGUEZ FROM CAMBODIA DRAW DIFFERENT CONCLUSIONS. ENGLISH-LANGUAGE -DAILY STAR- AND PRO-IRAQ "BEYRUT" SEE IT AS DEMONSTRATION THAT "AMERICA REMAINS A POWER TO RECKON WITH" ANYWHERE IN WORLD. PRO-LIBYA "AS SAFIR" PREDICTS IT WILL RESULT IN SETBACK FOR U.S. VIA "POLITICAL CRISES IN THAILAND AND OTHER REGIMES IN SOUTHEAST ASIA." END SUMMARY.

2. COMMENTING ON MAYAGUEZ INCIDENT, INDEPENDENT ENGLISH-LANGUAGE "DAILY STAR" WROTE: "CAMBODIA'S KHMER ROUGE HAS MISCALCULATED. IN EUPHORIA OF VICTORY THEY BELIEVED THEIR OWN CLAIMS THAT U.S. WAS PAPER TIGER OR TOOTHLESS LION. RESULT HAS BEEN AN UNNECESSARY HUMILIATION FOR NEW RULERS OF PHNOM PENH AS AMERICANS MOUNTED AN AIR-SEA OPERATION TO RESCUE U.S. FREIGHTER IN GULF OF THAILAND. FOR CAMBODIA, LESSON TO BE LEARNED IS FOR ONE TO KNOW ONE'S LIMITS AND LIMITATIONS; FOR REST OF WORLD, THAT AMERICA REMAINS A POWER TO RECKON WITH OUTSIDE CONFINES OF U.S. ITSELF. ARABS, ESPECIALLY PALESTINIANS, MIGHT HAVE COME TO WRONG CONCLUSIONS

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PAGE 02 BEIRUT 06281 161227Z

WITH AMERICA'S IGNOBLE DEPARTURE FROM SOUTHEAST ASIA. "TODAY

VIETNAM, TOMORROW PALESTINE', IS A POPULAR, BUT PERHAPS MISLEADING SLOGAN IF TAKEN TO REFLECT REALITIES OF WORLD SITUATION. OPERATION TO RELEASE FREIGHTER HAS UNDERLINED AMERICA'S WILLINGNESS -- ITS ABILITY HAS NEVER BEEN IN DOUBT -- TO INTERFERE IF ITS VITAL INTERESTS ARE ENDANGERED... IT WILL BE EXTREMELY DANGEROUS... TO ASSUME THAT U.S. HAS FINALLY DISCARDED ISRAEL AS A VITAL INTEREST. BECAUSE IF ARABS BASE THEIR CALCULATIONS ON SUCH A HYPOTHESIS AND THEY ARE PROVED WRONG, THEY WILL LOSE FAR MORE THAN A MISERABLE FREIGHTER."

3. ADNAN BADR OF PRO-IRAQ "BEYRUT" COMMENTS: "AMERICAN REACTION TO AMERICAN MILITARY OPERATION IN CAMBODIA IS MAINLY THAT IT WAS 'GOOD OPPORTUNITY' FOR PRESIDENT TO REASSERT, AFTER CRUSHING DEFEAT IN CAMBODIA AND VIETNAM, THAT HIS COUNTRY IS STILL A MAJOR POWER TO RECKON WITH ANYWHERE IN WORLD AND IS ABLE TO IMPOSE ITS 'DIGNITY' AND RUSH TO AID OF ITS ALLIES. 'GOODNESS' OF THIS OPPORTUNITY LIES IN FACT THAT IT CAME ON EVE OF AMERICAN PRESIDENT'S DEPARTURE FOR EUROPE WHERE HE WILL MEET HIS EUROPEAN ALLIES AND EMPHASIZE TO THEM THAT THEY CONTINUE TO BE, IN WORDS OF DR. KISSINGER, 'ABSOLUTE PRIORITY' AS FAR AS AMERICAN GOVERNMENT IS CONCERNED. PRESIDENT FORD WILL THEN MEET WITH PRESIDENT SADAT AND REITERATE THAT AMERICAN 'PEACE' EFFORTS IN MIDEAST REQUIRE 'CONCESSIONS BY BOTH PARTIES', MEANING MORE ARAB CONCESSIONS. AFTER THAT HE WILL MEET WITH ISRAELI PREMIER RABIN AND EMPHASIZE TO HIM THAT ISRAEL'S FEAR THAT EXPERIMENT OF PUPPET SAIGON REGIME WILL BE REPEATED WITH ISRAEL IS UNFOUNDED AND THAT U.S. WILL GIVE MORE MILITARY AND ECONOMIC BACKING TO ZIONIST STRUCTURE."

4. COMMENTING ON SAME SUBJECT, SAID MIHYO OF PRO-LIBYAN "AS SAFIR" WRITES: "SHIP INCIDENT AFFIRMS ONCE AGAIN THAT BATTLE OF INDOCHINA PEOPLE HAS NOT ENDED WITH LIBERATION OF VIETNAM, CAMBODIA AND WHAT REMAINS OF LAOS... IT CAN BE PREDICTED, AS OF NOW, THAT MORAL LEVERAGE WHICH WASHINGTON WANTED TO HAVE AS RESULT OF OPERATION OF SPY SHIP, WILL BE TRANSFORMED INTO QUICK MATERIAL SETBACKS IN FORM OF SUFFOCATING POLITICAL CRISES IN THAILAND AND OTHER REGIMES IN SE ASIA. THESE REGIMES HAVE REALIZED SERIOUS DIMENSIONS OF THEIR CONVERSION INTO SPEARHEAD OF DEFEATED IMPERIALISM AGAINST TRIUMPHANT PEOPLE OF INDOCHINA."

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